

REMARKS

The non-final Office Action mailed August 17, 2007 and references cited therein have been reviewed. Applicants note that claims 55-57 are objected to, but would be allowable if placed in independent form. Applicant has also noted that claims 6-8 are allowable over the cited art of record.

Claims 42-45, 48, 50, 52-53, 59, 62 and 68 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Reed in view of MacLeod. Claim 62 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Reed in view of MacLeod and further in view of Steelman.

Applicants have amended claim 42. Claim 42 requires 1) that each of the microphone arrangements include first and second electrical connectors designed to be electrically connected to at least one electrical connection of the pass-through such that at least one signal passes from an exterior of the mask to an interior of the mask and/or from an interior of the mask to an exterior of the mask, 2) that each of the microphone arrangements include at least one microphone, and 3) that at least one of the first microphone arrangement and said second microphone arrangement are detachably connected to the pass-through.

The Examiner asserted that Reed discloses a pass-through 44. Reed discloses that reference number 44 is a transceiver or super conductor unit (See Col. 34, ln. 21 to Col. 4, ln. 24). Reed discloses that an antenna member 66 and wiring 56 are connected to transceiver or super conductor unit 44 (See Col. 3, lns. 40-46; Col. 3, ln. 60 to Col. 4, ln. 7). Reed does not disclose, teach or suggest multiple microphones connected to the transceiver or super conductor unit 44. Reed also does not disclose, teach or suggest the transceiver or super conductor unit 44 being used to pass one or more signals between at least two microphones and between the interior and exterior of the mask

via the at least two microphones. For at least these reasons, claim 42 and all of the claims dependent therefrom are allowable over Reed. Steelman nor MacLeod in combination with Reed do not overcome the deficiencies of Reed as set forth above.

Applicants submit the claims presently pending in the above-identified patent application are in condition for allowance and a notice to that effect is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,
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